The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming Mary Luckiram to her first meeting as a Council Member.

1. **Highlighted Items**

   Council agreed the highlighted items.

   The Chair requested that Item 14, USS Consultation, be given due consideration if time allowed. Also the Senate Minutes (Item 13.2) was starred.
2. **Minutes**  
The minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2014 were **approved**.

3. **Matters Arising**  
Council noted the table of actions arising from past meetings and raised the following points in discussion:

- **Action 2, Minute 7, 22.03.13**: Council agreed to remove the action regarding the IP Policy as it had been completed but the review of IP Strategy still needed to come to Council.
- **Actions 14 and 15, Minute 10, 11.07.14**: Council agreed to amend the completion dates to Spring 2015 and November 2014 respectively.
- **Action 16, Minute 11.2, 11.07.14**: Council agreed to remove the action regarding the Student Charter as it had been completed.

4. **Conflicts of Interest**  
Council agreed that Members would indicate any conflicts of interest at the time of the item to which those conflicts pertained.

5. **Items Specially Brought Forward by the Chair**  
None.

6. **Council Calendar**  
Council noted the rolling Council Calendar and the following points were raised:

- Members were reminded that the topic for the plenary discussion on 27th November would be Institutional Culture and the Chair confirmed that he, along with Andy Friend and Philippa Hird would each share their experiences of implementing major change programmes. Lynne Brindley would provide a brief paper of her experience as she would not be able to attend the plenary event. The Executive Team would be asked to comment on the presentations in relation to the current situation at City.
- The Away Day would take place on Friday 6th February 2015 and the Chair confirmed that during the morning session Council would consider the current strategic positioning of the University and the process for developing the new Strategic Plan. In the afternoon there would be a short tour of the Estate where investments have recently been made. The tour would incorporate visits to two Schools.

7. **Vice-Chancellor’s Report**  
The Vice-Chancellor highlighted several items from his report. In discussion the following points were noted:

- Undergraduate recruitment had gone reasonably well against a stretching target. Currently, City was approximately 60 international students under target, 60 ABB+ under target, and 150 SNC above target. NHS recruitment was on target. It was expected that first year undergraduate numbers would reduce by around 3% by December.
- Postgraduate taught registrations were expected to be on target at 4,400 (4,000 last year) with a significant increase of around 300 on the Cass Masters programmes. The Dean of Cass confirmed this was largely due to the popularity of the new Marketing degree and the replacement of another degree programme which had not run in 2013/14.
- There had been a heavy reliance on clearing (between 25% and 33% of the undergraduate intake came through clearing). Clearing had lasted for only about 4 hours this year. There were now around 11% of students who went through clearing without going through the normal UCAS arrangements,
many students traded up through clearing which meant that City gained and lost students in the process and some students accumulated offers through clearing before deciding. Therefore, the University made a significant number of offers in the clearing window and had to then wait to see if they were accepted. Next year would see further changes as the undergraduate student intake would be uncapped for the first time. Council noted the business continuity processes around clearing were now much more robust with considerable redundancy built in.

- There would be a change of focus for the Olive Tree Programme from undergraduate education to research that engaged Olive Tree alumni, policy practitioners and City staff.
- The City of London Academy Islington, which is sponsored by City University London, had decided not to proceed with a Free School Academy Trust (primary school). It was possible that this might be revisited.
- The launch of Student Self Service for confirmation of registration letters. Annually there were around 17,000 of these letters.
- The postcode area of EC1V had emerged as the top UK postcode for starting a business in a new list compiled by accountancy firm UHY Hacker Young. The area is home to the Tech City cluster of technology companies surrounding the Old Street (Silicon) Roundabout which generated over 15,000 new businesses last year.
- The Library achieved excellent results in the NSS with student satisfaction at 86% (improving from 77% over two years).
- FOI requests continued to increase, 56 had been received in the last 3 months. The forecast was that the number of requests for 2014 would reach a total of 220.
- Council noted the USS consultation on significant pension reform and the University’s response to UUK. Members noted that UCU was balloting for both strike action and action short of a strike and that the proposed pension changes were likely to provoke a significant reaction in the sector including from influential academics specialising in the subject who disagreed that the proposed action was necessary. Council noted the complexity of the proposed change due to the scale of USS and the cultural issues. Council would continue to keep this issue under review.
- Council also noted that the Comprehensive Spending Review was likely to be painful and would impact following the election. All parties were committed to not inflating the £9,000 fee. It was expected that more funding would go to Innovate UK which was judged to have been a success and some QR funding was likely to transfer to HEIF.

Decisions

(i) Council approved the recommendation to name the Social Sciences Building the “Rhind Building” in honour of Professor David Rhind CBE, FRS, FBA, Vice-Chancellor from 1998 to 2007 and honorary graduate 2011. Council noted that the naming was not in perpetuity.

(ii) The University Secretary would add “USS” to all future agendas.

8. President of the Students’ Union Report

The President gave a report covering the following points:

- The appointment of a CEO, Yemi Gbajobi and two other key posts.
- The programme of events for Freshers’ week had been successful.
- The Trustee Board would hold an away day in October as part of the Governance Review.
• Work was underway to support Schools in the election of Programme Representatives, and to train and support them so there was effective articulation of the student voice at Programme and School level.

• Council received the Student Charter, “We are City” for information. The Charter was published in every student handbook and is on the web. Council noted that the biggest challenge in making best use of the Charter was making sure all were aware of it and that it informed the work of programme representatives and student committees. It was suggested that the next iteration of the Charter include an explicit reference to student accommodation.

**Part Two – Major Items for Discussion or Decision**

9. **Senate Annual Assurance Report**
   Council considered the Senate Annual Assurance Report which detailed matters considered by Senate during 2013/14 and was compiled from the Senate minutes. Senate at its October meeting had reviewed the report and agreed to give Council assurance that the University’s arrangements for the enhancement of academic quality and assurance of academic standards were **Adequate and Effective**. Where there were issues, they were not material to this judgment and they were in the process of being addressed. During the year the implementation of actions addressing issues raised by the 2013 QAA Institutional Review (which had confirmed that the University had achieved all of the 4 confidence judgements assessed) had been monitored by Senate. The following points were noted:
   - Members were reminded that this was the second report. Only one other University was known to have produced an annual report. The CUC and HEFCE considered it to be good practice and the CUC would highlight it, as such, when they published examples of good practice following their review of Governance.
   - The Vice-Chancellor highlighted various points from the report. He was concerned that Senate currently risked being diverted from its primary role of enhancing academic quality and assuring academic standards and he would continue to keep this under review.
   - Council noted the elected Senators’ concerns about PSR and NSS as set out in the Senate Minutes.
   - The percentage of module evaluation scores at or below 3.5 had improved from around 20% to 7% which was good and much closer to competing institutions at around 5%.

10 **Finance**

10.1 **Finance Update 2013/14**
   Council considered the Finance Update for 2013/14. The University’s Draft Financial Statements for 2013/14 reported a deficit of £7.7M, compared to the forecast deficit of £10.8M. The following points were noted:
   - The University’s cash position by the end of the 2014/15 financial year was expected to reduce to a balance of around £20M. In that context the University would continue to contemplate whether it would be prudent and cost effective to put in place a banking facility. The University would consider retendering its primary banking arrangements to ensure best value could be achieved. Council would receive an update later in the year.
   - There were lessons to be learnt from the flash forecasting last year. This would be treated, in future, as a financial re-estimate of student fee income following the student recruitment process.
10.2 Finance and Student Number Update 2014/15
This item was covered in the Vice-Chancellor’s report (Item 7).

10.3 Investments Report
Council considered the annual report on investments held and their performance. In discussion the following points were noted:

- Cash and investment balances started at £89.5M in July 2013, peaked at £98.6M in September 2013 and ended the year at £40.9M. By July 2015, cash balances were expected to reduce to £22M. During the year the average return was 0.49%.
- Endowed funds totalled £11.6M. The Blackrock Charitrak Fund returned an average 2.95% on £5.3M. The remaining £6.3M was held as short term deposits and cash with an average return of 0.49%.
- An informal review undertaken by Astleigh Consulting Ltd (who advise a significant number of institutions in the sector on treasury investment) on the University’s Investment Policy and arrangements had been favourable.
- The CFO met with the trustees of the Grammenos Fund who had expressed concern about the returns being received.

Decision
The CFO and John Low would meet with the trustees of the Grammenos Fund to discuss their concerns and possible alternative arrangements. Council would receive an update and, if applicable, consider proposals for amendments to the Investment Policy at a future meeting.

11. Progress in implementing the Strategic Plan

11.1 Strategic Plan Biannual Progress Report
Council considered the Strategic Plan biannual progress report which included updates from each of the work streams (Academic Excellence, Succeeding with Students, Research & Enterprise, International, IS, Property & Facilities and Culture). The Vice-Chancellor introduced the item giving a high level overview of progress against the Strategic Plan noting that 280 staff had been appointed since 2011 and significant increases had been achieved since then in research income, grants applied for and consultancy income. Also there had been a significant increase in tariff scores. The negatives were that citations had been slow to rise, there were still poor completion rates for PhDs, there was poor staff engagement albeit at a time of great change, a structural deficit and employability and progression issues. In discussion the following points were noted:

- PhD students’ completion rates would improve but it would take some time for that to show. Key changes made were the introduction of the new Graduate School and from 2011 all research supervisors must be research-excellent.
- It was noted that Council did receive the KPI/PIs biannually along with the risk register at a different meeting. It might be possible to more clearly link progress on the work streams to the impact they were having on the outcomes.
- The Chair noted that the biannual reports provided a good base for thinking about the next Strategic Plan.

11.2 Strategic Estates Biannual Progress Report
Council considered the biannual progress report from the Director of Property & Facilities (PAF) which presented a high level update on the projects approved or confirmed by Council as part of the revised Estates Investment Plan January 2014. In discussion the following points were noted:
• The PAF and Finance teams had achieved an outturn of within 3% of forecast for £39M of work in 2013/14.
• The relocation of PAF to College Building project was complete. The Abacus House refurbishment was nearing completion and the SHS alteration works in 1 Myddelton Street were under way. Tait level 3 and LSP phase 2 new teaching areas were in the final stages of completion for autumn teaching. The Library works to levels 5 and 6 were complete. There had been a significant increase in the number and quality of learning seats. A major contribution to VFM had been achieved through the development and upgrading of the basement areas.
• The new Students’ Union bar was in the process of being fitted out and would be open in November 2014 and CitySport, the new and enhanced sports centre would open in February 2015.
• A case to develop a major lecture theatre and the main entrance would come to Council in November 2014 and the case to develop Sebastian Street primarily as a Graduate facility would come to the May 2015 meeting.
• The SIPCo Chair reported that the Director of PAF’s proposition of a lease at Bath Street with a yield of 6-7% was compelling and if concluded, would leave any future sale as a financial decision.
• Council congratulated Kevin Gibbons, David Owens and the Property & Facilities team for the major transformational work they had achieved for the Estate.

**Decision**

Council approved the extension of its delegation of the authority for SIPCo to approve the lease of the Bath Street building until the next meeting of Council.

11.3 Information Services Work Stream

Council considered a progress report from the Information Services Work Stream. In discussion the following points were noted:

• The Chair of SIPCo introduced the item noting that it was clear that an enormous amount of remedial work had been carried out on student-facing activity. This had been reflected in the significant improvement in NSS scores (89% satisfaction with IT now compared to 82% 2012). There had also been a significant reduction in the cost of service. The challenge for the future was to be sector leading for education and research which would need the pro-active involvement of the academic staff. Academic staff needed to understand and develop the new technologies.
• The sector leading investments supporting education and research had included the launch of Moodle 2 in September 2013; provision of high performance computing environments; the complete refurbishment of the radio facilities and the establishment of 100 MacLab units for Journalism which brought their systems to BBC broadcast standard; and the increase in storage to 50Gb for Office 365 for students and staff.
• The CIO invited Council members to contact him if they wished to take a tour of Journalism’s facilities.
• The Health Sciences library collection and services had been seamlessly consolidated at the University Library as the School moved out from its premises at West Smithfield over the summer.
• Areas which might generate future excitement across the University included: possibly working with a software provider to develop innovation in student management systems; using big data to help identify learning issues and support student learning and improving student satisfaction as measured by the NSS by improving service.
• Council members noted that there might be possibilities of leveraging advantage from the Tech City connection. Interaction with research-excellent academics might produce some interesting outcomes.
• Council asked as to whether City was sector leading in VFM. The CIO, Paul Haley said that Information Services was driving in that direction. It was noted that procurement had been re-invigorated with the potential to bring in specialist skills. The PSR savings that had been made were significant.
• Council congratulated Paul Haley and the Information Services team for the transformation they had brought about in Information Services.

11.4 Professional Services Review
Council received a verbal update report on PSR and in discussion the following points were noted:
• The Student & Academic Administration proposal had not yet come to the PSR Steering Group and therefore the project risk register was still to be received. The elected Senators’ had asked that their concern at this delay to be reported to Council. However, the PSR Steering Group and ExCo had reflected on PSR1 and designed PSR2 to be a slower and much more engaged process. There had been a positive meeting between the PSR Steering Group and the Deans on accountabilities in the redesigned service and a document setting these out was being agreed. The organisational change design was almost complete. Ensuring each School was comfortable with a consistent structure and job descriptions rather than one developed over time for their School had taken time.
• Once the Phase Two consultation was complete and proposals were implemented in January 2015, PSR will end. The University will use its annual planning round to assure that Service levels, efficiency and costs are appropriate.
• The Restructuring Committee would meet in late October and the Chair, Philippa Hird would report back to Council on PSR in November.

11.5 Student Surveys 2014 Report
Council received a report on the findings of the 2014 student surveys which covered NSS, Your Voice 1, Your Voice 2 and the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey 2014. In discussion the following points were noted:
• The University was disappointed that the response to NSS Question 22 on ‘overall satisfaction’ had dropped by 3% to 83%, the average of questions 1-21 had dropped by 1%, and the latter had had an impact on the University’s ranking in league tables as others improved their performance. However action plans were being implemented or developed to address issues highlighted by the survey.
• Programme level responses would be managed via the Annual Programme Evaluation round as usual.
• Efforts would be made to draw on expertise from programme teams that had achieved significant improvement, to share their experience, through fora including Teaching and Learning Committees, LEaD events and activities, and the Programme Directors Forum. However, some of the issues are very different across the University so some actions will need to be specific.
• Improvements in the IT and Library scores indicated that the investments in those areas was improving the student experience.
• The members of Council who were Deans were asked for their views: Professor Newman noted a specific issue with a validated Foundation Degree with low scores which impacted the results in his School. He noted the importance of Professional Service Directors working with academics to
ensure the student experience was good. Professor Haberman noted the impact of one badly delivered module on the NSS results. It did not seem to affect the scoring of future modules. NSS should be an assessment of the total experience, but one badly delivered module has a major impact on the NSS score. He would like action to be taken to help students understand that the NSS should evaluate the overall experience.

- It was noted that the recent HEFCE report *UK review of the provision of information about higher education: National Student Survey results and trends analysis 2005-13* highlighted the following trend: “the majority of ethnic groups are less satisfied with assessment and feedback, teaching and learning and academic support”. It was suggested that the University might wish to explore this observation further.

- Although the overall NSS result and some of the individual programme results were disappointing, the Executive did not consider it to be a significant backward step and was confident that the action being taken would lead to a return to the upward trend marked by the 2013 performance.

**Decision**
Council would receive a report on the actions being taken to impact on future survey results.

### 11.6 The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide
Council considered the results of the guide which were published in *The Sunday Times* on 21st September. City’s position in this year’s table was 46th nationally, a fall of three places overall. City fell in rank across four metrics (student satisfaction, services/facilities spend, completion rate and firsts/2:1s). City climbed in three (UCAS entry points, SSR and graduate prospects) and retained the same rank for research quality.

### 12 Intellectual Property Policy
Council considered the IP Policy: In discussion the following points were noted:

- The policy had been reviewed by Iain Gray on behalf of Council. He felt it was traditional in its approach but had the virtue of clarifying and tidying up the current position. He had made some suggestions as to the future which might incorporate a broader review. He welcomed the clarification that the policy was non-contractual but action could be taken for non-compliance under the University’s disciplinary and grievance procedures.

- Members raised a number of issues which should be reviewed: Did the policy apply to students and if not what governed IP developed by students? Professor Fothergill explained that, whilst the policy covered all students, the University would not normally claim ownership of intellectual property (IP) created by undergraduate students or taught postgraduate students, whereas it would normally own IP created by postgraduate research students. Exceptions were described in the Policy.

- On A2.4 vii) it was suggested it should read “irrecoverable VAT” rather than just “VAT”.

- A member raised the issue as to whether there should be a similar framework for consultancy. Schools were currently considering models for consultancy. When implemented the new model would encourage bringing consultancy in-house rather than it being done privately.

- The revenue sharing model was unchanged from the previous policy.

**Decision**
Council **approved** the revenue sharing arrangements in respect of the Intellectual Property Policy and a change to the Ordinances to require these to be approved by Council.

**Part Three – Items for information and not to be discussed unless starred**

*The following items were not starred for discussion and therefore not discussed and taken as read with the exception of items 13.2, 13.3, 14 and 16.*

13. **Minutes for Note**

The following minutes had been approved by the Chair, but not yet by the full committee:

13.1 Strategy, Implementation and Performance Committee, 25.09.14
13.2 Senate, 01.10.14 – covered under the Senate Assurance Report (Item 9)

Council received a verbal update from the Chair of ARC on the following meeting:

13.3 Audit and Risk Committee, 06.10.14

The meeting was preparatory to ARC giving its annual opinion and covered internal audit and management assurances. The next meeting would cover the Financial Statements. There had been two limited reports. ARC wished to look at value for money in its broadest sense including the added value to the student from their experience at City, not just cost control.

14. **USS Consultation**

This item was covered under the Vice-Chancellor’s report (Item 7).

15. **University Events**

Council **noted** the list of upcoming events.

16. **FOI Review**

Council **agreed** the open/closed/restricted classification of items for the meeting as set out in the agenda.

17. **Date of Next Meeting**

Friday 28th November 2014.

On the evening of 27th November 2014 (6-9pm) at The Hub, Cass Business School, there will be a discussion on Institutional Culture. All Council members are expected to attend.

The message setting out highlights from this Council meeting would be circulated to staff today.

**Part Four – Short Meeting of Independent Members**

18. **Short Meeting of Independent Members**

There was a short meeting of the Independent Members, which was not minuted.

Rob Woodward
Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council
October 2014